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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor : Mark D. Markel

Art Unit : Unknown

Serial No. : 09/996,978

Examiner : Unknown

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Title : METHOD FOR TREATING TISSUE IN ARTHROSCOPIC ENVIRONMENT

Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

RECEIVED

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TECHNOLOGY CENTER R3700

Prior to examination, please amend the application as follows:

In the specification:

Please replace paragraph [0028] with the following rewritten paragraph:

a1  
[0028] The method of the present invention can be performed using the disclosed apparatus in combination with other standard arthroscopic implements such as an irrigating system, a viewing system and a positioning system in addition to the otherwise conventional equipment utilized in a minimally invasive procedure conducted on a mammal under general anesthesia. For example, a standard arthroscopic system such as the one described in U.S. Patent No. 6,068,628, the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by this reference, can be utilized for access to the joint capsule. Similarly, another arthroscopic system which can be utilized for access to the joint capsule is described in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/780,648, filed February 8, 2001, and entitled "*Method and Apparatus for Treatment of Disrupted Articular Cartilage*", the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by this reference.

Replace paragraph [0032] with the following rewritten paragraph:

a2  
[0032] Referring to FIGS. 1 and 2, apparatus 37 generally includes an elongate probe member 71 having a proximal extremity 71a and a distal extremity 71b. A probe handle 72 is mounted to proximal extremity 71a and an active electrode 73 (shown in FIG. 3) is provided on distal extremity 71b. One should appreciate that other probes can be used in accordance with the present invention. For example, other probes which can be utilized are described in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/780,648, filed February 8, 2001, and entitled "*Method and Apparatus for*